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## FEATURES OF TWO PARIS ART EXHIBITIONS

The French Salon, which since the year 1673, when it was founded, has been suspended for political exigencies in several periods of its existence, holds this Spring its 124th exhibition. There are five thousand numbers in the catalogue, and it is interesting to note that of the nine hundred painters who exhibit there are fifty-six Americans, and among the four hundred sculptors there are ten American.

The present Salon, according to cable advice, offers two novel features. The National Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory exhibits in the gallery at the top of the main stairway models executed in the eighteenth century by Falconnet, Bouchardon and Boisard for the artisans to work into porcelain. There is a series of Florianesque shepherdesses, presenting vivid contrast to the nervous, realistic figures affected by contemporary artists at the Sèvres establishment. This innovation is due to the practical common sense of M. Dujardin-Beaumetz, Under Minister of Fine Arts.

The second novelty — and this amounts almost to a revolution — is that the venerable "hors concours," artists who have obtained so many official honors and medals as to be exempt from the stimulating force of competition, are now judged according to their merits, and their works are hung, not necessarily on the line as hitherto, but are "skied" or put in obscure corners if they fail to maintain the required standard of excellence. This salutary regulation, applied with absolute impartiality by M. Albert Dawant, president of the jury, greatly enhances the appearance of the Salon and accords freedom and fair play to the younger men.

The Salon of 1906 will long be remembered because of the superb mural decorations executed by Henri Martin for the Capitol of Toulouse, which, together with eighty-seven sketches and drawings that served as studies, fill the large room set apart for them. Henri Martin's idea of mural decoration differs radically from that of most of his contemporaries. In Martin's conceptions there is no place for waxen Adonises kissing the brows of simpering Psyches adorned with butterfly wings, nor for hypnotized sirens straddling Tritons, nor for orgies of nude figures suggestive of a Turkish bath swarming with ballet girls.

Henri Martin is the Balzac of decorative painting. He has bitter enemies among the classic academicians. Although he has for many years fully merited the medal of honor, he will probably never obtain it, for, according to an absurd bureaucratic regulation, this coveted distinction cannot be awarded to an artist, to whom an entire room has been reserved. Martin idealizes men and women of to-day and depicts the "human comedy" as he sees it in town and country. His splendid panels, luminous in color, of absolute purity of line and vibrating with movement and life, depict hard work, now in the broad fields of Gascony, then in

the factories of the town, and again in the domains of thought and of mental research—in a word, subjects having a vital interest to all.

In the course of a two-mile walk through the immense galleries of the forty-three halls devoted to the department of painting there are, perhaps, some two or three hundred works that deserve attention.



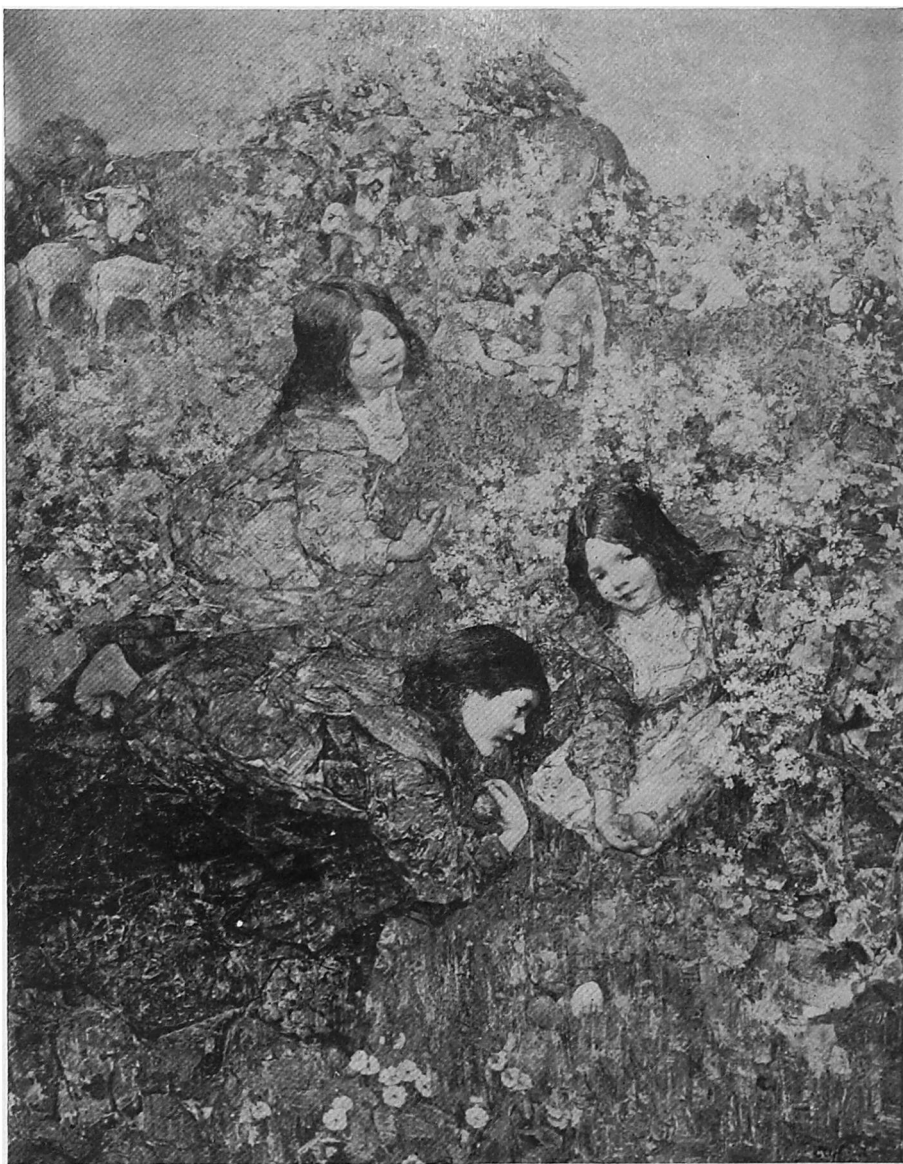
GROSVENOR THOMAS

The twenty-second annual exhibition of the Société de Pastellistes Français, contains 127 numbers, and, taken altogether, is somewhat better than for some years past. There are some clever pastel portraits. Dagnan-Bouveret sends three portraits of women. That of "Mlle. X," a slender blonde young woman in a pale blue gown, standing in a park and resting her right hand on a prayer book supported by a stone pedestal, is in the artist's happiest vein. Laurent-Desrousseaux has a striking portrait of Mme. Marcel Fournier in rich tones of brown and of sable fur. Indeed, portraits are exhibited by nearly all the members of the society, including Charles Léandre, Jacquet, Georges Desvallières, Cornillier, Maurice Elliot, Eugène Loup, Fernand Thévenot, Gervex and Guirand de

Scevola. There are nude studies done at Rome by Albert Besnard.

A half dozen pastel drawings by Lévy-Dhurmer of female figures — each in a different color tone, red, orange, green or yellow — are of remarkable brilliancy of technique and almost illuminate that portion of the gallery where they are displayed. Lhermitte remains faithful to his fields of ripe wheat and autumnal valleys, with glimpses of river or pond. Billotte exhibits the dark moonlight studies made in Holland or in Boulogne. Aman-Jean has drawn some sketches of nymphs bathing or toying with garlands of flowers.

Gaston Latouche makes a new departure — this time in religious subjects — and his "Prayer of the Infant Christ" and "The Infant Christ Sleeping" evince remarkable purity of sentiment. The "Last Evening of the Campanile" was drawn by Latouche in Venice two days before the collapse of that memorable tower. Le Sidaner exhibits a pleasing "Church



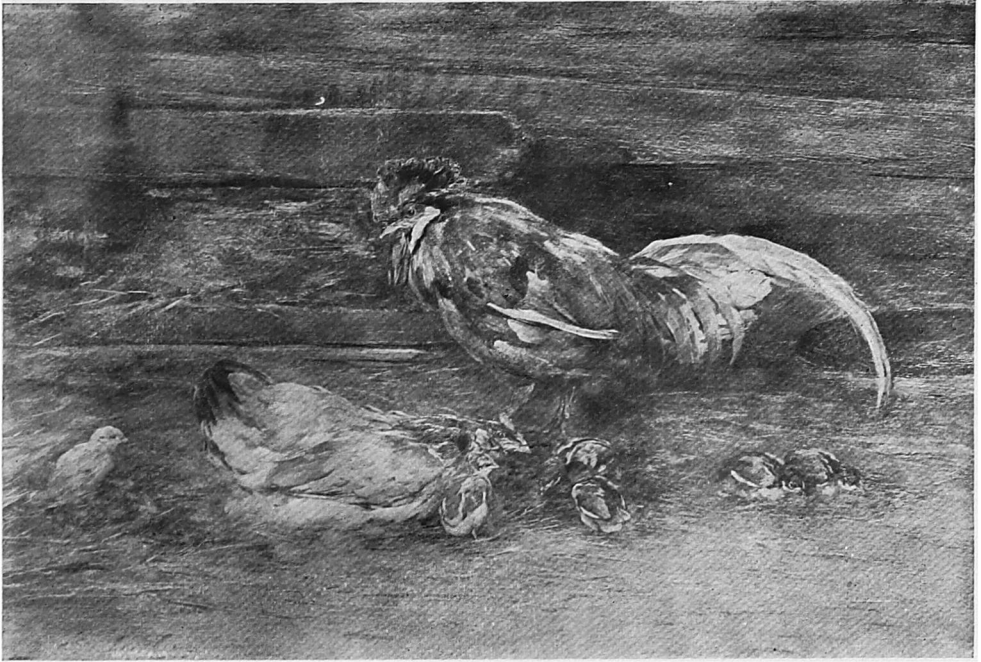
EASTER MORNING  
By Edward A. Hornel

of San Giorgio" while a motor boat speeds across the Grand Canal. Charles Lèandre strikes an effective note with his "Muse of Montmartre." A painter is working in an open lot on the slopes of Montmartre in a warm afternoon light. A view of Paris is outlined in the distance. Behind the artist stands a dark figure of a young Parisian woman, who imparts inspiration and energy to the toiling painter.

Jean Veber sends half a dozen genial caricatures that give a full measure of his startling brilliancy of imagination and warmth of color. "La Soirée Parisienne" is an exquisite bit of irony. It is chamber music presented in its most tedious aspect. A dozen men and women in evening dress are seated in a salon. In the middle of the room is a black piano. A young woman in white, with mouth wide open, is seated, playing and singing a duet, while a tenor is nervously striving to catch a high C. A large electric lamp, covered with a red shade, gives mellow tone to the scene. Another weird bit of fancy is presented in a duel between two legless cripples, the younger of whom is about to stab his opponent with a carving knife. Pastel is a favorite medium of the French artists.

Concerning the salon of the Société Nationale des Beaux Arts, Pierre Veber says in the Paris edition of the New York Herald: "Never was there such a black salon; never was there a salon so lacking in originality. It is similar to what it was last year, but even duller if possible. One might say that all these painters have realized that painting has attained its evolution, and that unless a political or social earthquake occurs, it can never be rejuvenated, and they overcome one by lassitude, always painting the same subjects in the same manner. The lassitude I remarked at the salon of the independents. It is again found here. Nobody inquires which of us is going to become a god. The most audacious have calmed down. There are fewer foreigners, which is a bad sign. It might be very well that the salon is an effete institution. There are many absentees. You seek in vain for certain great names of the artistic world. However, there are no fewer painted canvases on the walls, and the pictures are larger; that is all. It is only fair to say that they are more finished. A very pleasing reaction has set in against sketches and mere studies. Student pictures are now carefully sent to the Nationale, signed, it is true, by painters who have not studied. The amateur still rages, but he occupies less space. "There is 'Une dentellière' freely treated by Mrs. Nourse. Mrs. Nourse was born in Cincinnati, and paints in Paris in Scandinavian tonalities, Norman and Dutch lace-makers. It would be impossible to be more cosmopolitan. Walter Gay exhibits a whole apartment, empty, of course, for he refuses to accept the tyranny of the human face. Of the setting, it might be said that it recalls a provincial romance. It shows a hall, a small drawing-room with portraits, a big drawing-room, a library, a bedroom, and a dining-room."

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